

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 088275

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 1843 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN
CAIRO, DAMASCUS, JIDDA, KUWAIT, TEL AVIV, AND JERUSALEM
DATED APR 3, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L
BEIRUT 1843

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PLO, LE, MOPS, SY, IZ

SUBJ: REMARKS OF ADF COMMANDER SAMI KHATIB

1. IN A MEETING WITH EMBOFF ON APRIL 3 ADF COMMANDER
SAMI KHATIB SAID THE FOLLOWING:

2. ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 1-2 AN 18- TRUCK CONVOY,
COMPOSED OF MOSTLY SYRIAN AND SOME IRAQI VEHICLES,
ENTERED LEBANON FROM SYRIA AND WENT SOUTH WITH SUPPLIES
FOR THE PALESTINIANS. KHATIB CLAIMED HE DID NOT KNOW
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WHAT WAS IN THESE TRUCKS BECAUSE THEY WERE COVERED.

3. THE SYRIANS AND ADF NEVERTHELESS WOULD DEFINITELY
NOT ALLOW ANY MORE CONVOYS CARRYING EITHER MUNITIONS OR
VOLUNTEERS TO ENTER LEBANON FOR THE PALESTINIANS,
ALTHOUGH CONVOYS CARRYING "HUMANITARIAN SUPPLIES"
WOULD BE PERMITTED. IN PART, KHATIB EXPLAINED, THIS

WAS BECAUSE THE PALESTINIANS HAD SAID THAT THEY HAD NO FURTHER NEED OF MEN OR MILITARY EQUIPMENT.

4. THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF IRAQI VOLUNTEERS IN COUNTRY WAS 600. KHATIB CLAIMED THESE IRAQI VOLUNTEERS DID NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE PALESTINIAN MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND WERE BASICALLY "FOR TELEVISION." (COMMENT: THIS IS THE SAME LINE TAKEN BY ASIM QANSUH, HEAD OF THE PRO-SYRIAN BA'ATH PARTY).

5. THE ADF WOULD NOT CONSIDER MOVING SOUTH TO THE LITANI AS LONG AS THE ISRAELIS REMAINED IN LEBANON. THIS IDEA COULD "PERHAPS" BE CONSIDERED AFTER ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, BUT COULD NEVER BE DONE WITHOUT ISRAELI APPROVAL. A MORE REALISTIC APPROACH WAS PERHAPS TO DEPLOY UNITS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY BETWEEN THE U.N. LINES AND THE MOST SOUTHERN SYRIAN LINES.

6. KHATIB SAID HE HAD MET WITH PALESTINIAN LEADERS THE EVENING OF APRIL 1, AND THAT HE BELIEVED FATAH WOULD TRY TO RESPECT THE PRESENT CEASE-FIRE, BECAUSE: (1) IT DID NOT WANT THE U.N. "ON ITS BACK;" AND (2) THE U.N., BY DEALING DIRECTLY WITH ARAFAT, HAD ASSUAGED HIS FEELINGS AND MADE HIM FEEL THAT THE PLO WAS ONE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CEASE-FIRE. THE REJECTIONISTS PROBABLY WOULD NOT OBSERVE THE CEASEFIRE, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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SINCE THEY BELIEVED "THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT ISRAEL WAS TO HAVE ISRAELI TROOPS OCCUPY ALL ARAB CAPITALS."

7. THE ADF WAS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN SECURITY IN BEIRUT, KHATIB CONTINUED. IT HAD ELIMINATED THE ROVING PATROLS OF ARMED MEN IN WEST BEIRUT AND HAD ALREADY IMPROVED THE SITUATION BY 80 PERCENT. (COMMENT: WE HAVE NOT SEEN ARMED VEHICLES PATROLLING IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY SINCE MARCH 30.) THE ADF FOR THE MOMENT WAS ALLOWING FEDAYEEN TO GUARD THE PERIMETERS OF SHATILA CAMP AND WAS ALSO ALLOWING LEBANESE POLITICAL PARTIES TO PUT ARMED GUARDS IN FRONT OF THEIR OFFICES. WITHIN TWO TO THREE WEEKS THE ADF WOULD GET THESE LEBANESE ARMED GUARDS OFF THE STREETS AS WELL, KHATIB CLAIMED. PARKER UNQUOTE VANCE

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